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LETTER DATED 21 FEBRUARY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND KAZAKSTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have the honour to transmit the text of the joint Russian-Kazak statement on Afghanistan, adopted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, E. M. Primakov, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakstan, K. K. Tokaev, in Moscow on 19 February 1997 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. ARISTANBEKOVA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Kazakstan
to the United Nations

(Signed) S. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
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Annex

Joint Russian-Kazak Statement on Afghanistan of 19 February 1997

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Kazakstan, E. M. Primakov and K. K. Tokaev, in the course of discussions which took place in Moscow on 19 February 1997, exchanged views on the course of events in Afghanistan and the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the inter-Afghan conflict.

Serious concern was expressed at the continuing armed conflict in Afghanistan and the attempts of the Taliban movement to resolve the issue of power in the country in its favour by military means.

Particular concern was felt at the fact that, as a result of the military action, the civilian population is suffering and the number of refugees is on the increase. The incidents of serious violation of human rights, of persecution on political and ethnic grounds, and of violation of the norms of international law, including actions that prevent the normal performance of the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan, merit condemnation.

The Russian Federation and Kazakstan call on the parties to the conflict in Afghanistan to halt military action immediately and to begin the search for ways of reaching agreement for the purpose of restoring civil peace. In so doing, the legitimate interests of all ethnic and religious groups and regions must be taken into account. None of the Afghan military-political groupings must impose its dominating role on the others.

Having called for the cessation of outside interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, the Ministers underlined that a necessary condition for the settlement of the conflict must be the maintenance of the State independence and territorial integrity of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Having noted the positive significance of the meeting of the Russian, Kazak, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Tajik leaders held in Almaty on 4 October 1996, the decisions of which were reflected in Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) of 22 October 1996, on Afghanistan, the Ministers called for the expansion of cooperation and for an intensification of the collective efforts of the Russian Federation and the Central Asian countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, both within the framework of the Almaty meeting and on a bilateral basis, to neutralize the negative impact of the continuing conflict in Afghanistan and to secure the common interests of our countries in the region. In so doing, concern was expressed at the fact that to date the politically significant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on Afghanistan have not begun to be implemented.

Agreement was reached to continue the exchange of views and the consultations between the Russian Federation and Kazakstan on the Afghan problem and on an intensification of the joint efforts of our countries aimed at implementing the United Nations decisions.